

Foreword

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The main theme of several papers published in this issue, the last one in 2017, is – again – democratic governance. We would like to remind our readers that democratic governance was also the focus of this year's issue no. 3. We may conclude that this year has been characterised by a search for democratic legitimacy and solutions for improving democratic governance, at least in our journal.

The first paper in this issue analyses the relations between local democracy and national politics. It develops a fine-grained approach, which is more appropriate and scientifically more productive than the traditional approach based on a simple dichotomy of national and local politics and political actors. The authors employ this new approach in the context of Belgium, analysing empirical data and indexing local party system nationalisation.

The second paper accentuates the issue of possible representation of sub-regional identities in the Croatian regional institutional setting. It explores the ways of overcoming disagreements over the potential amalgamation of current counties into larger regions by analysing European experiences and the particularities of the Croatian governance system. Bicameral regional representative bodies are proposed as a step towards a new democratic regional governance structure.

The next paper explores the contemporary crisis of the bureaucratic state and a quest for new patterns of governance, which may be observed in western countries but also in Russia. The author identifies the non-responsiveness of public institutions, which are not fitted to contemporary public expectations and demands, as the main reason behind the failing public governance reforms in Russia and analyses these in great detail.

The fourth paper promotes a normative approach which advocates that the constitution is an effective instrument of achieving intergenerational justice by spanning all generations in society. Changing the interpretation of constitutional provisions according to the particular circumstances of time and place may enable the constitution to be stable in writing, but adaptable in meaning, thus responding to the ever-changing needs of people in future societies.

The closing paper in this section compares the understandings of dual citizenship and analyses the development of citizenship policies in Sweden, Germany, and Croatia. While Sweden and Germany have transformed their citizenship policies in order to enable the integration of foreigners, the Croatian dual citizenship policy has changed in the direction of restrictive normalisation.

Within the second section, on public management themes, a single paper identifies the institutional and other mechanisms which affect the effective implementation of a quality management policy. It also presents several lessons for Croatia based on the Spanish experience of quality management in public administration.

As I wish you all the best in your scientific and research endeavours in 2018, I would like to announce that over the coming year our journal will devote special attention to the issues of diversity, migration, integration, the mutual adjustment of people, and changes in public administration caused by increased cultural diversity in Europe.

Papers dealing with other public administration, policy, law, theory, and governance issues are also welcome.

Have a good read!

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Editor-in-chief